

## **Town of Arlington Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)**

Tuesday, April 26, 2005 7:15 PM

Committee members present: Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Ralph Elwell, Jeff Maxtutis, Lt. Jim McHugh, Chuck Pappas, Mike Rademacher, John Sanchez, Ed Starr.

Visitors: John Chicarello, Howard Muise, Allen Reedy.

### **Administration**

The Committee welcomed Chuck Pappas, the new designee of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, to his first TAC meeting. The minutes of March 22, 2005 were approved unanimously. Ed Starr distributed an updated TAC Contact List and the Committee's contribution to the 2004 Arlington Town Report.

### **Downing Square**

John Sanchez reported that Public Works has begun filling sandbags for the mock-up of the new Downing Square design, and that they expect to be ready to implement the trial roadway design within two weeks. There was a question on whether the Recycled Technologies raised crosswalk device to be placed on Park Avenue had been ordered; John stated that he would check with the Town Engineer.

The Committee agreed that publicity in the form of a press release to the Arlington Advocate and the Arlington List would be appropriate before implementing the mock-up; Elisabeth Carr-Jones agreed to draft the press release with the assistance of Ralph Elwell. A briefing for the Board of Selectmen is needed before moving forward. Following the briefing, a press release and mock-up implementation should be done within the next two weeks. Ed Starr and Elisabeth agreed to meet with the Town Engineer to work out the details of the plan.

### **Dallin School**

Jeff Maxtutis distributed a draft transportation report and introduced the other members of the working group for the Dallin School safety project: John Chicarello (Acting Dallin Principal), Allen Reedy (Dallin parent), Elisabeth Carr-Jones and Heather Thomas (Dallin Safety Committee and Safe Routes to Schools Coordinator, who could not be present at the meeting). John Chicarello presented an overview of the needs of the community, the impact of the Dallin rebuild project and the progress of the Permanent Town Building Committee.

Jeff presented an overview of the existing conditions, including deficiencies not related to the rebuild project and recent traffic data collected by the Police Department on Florence Avenue. Allen Reedy presented an overview of the recommendations under consideration by the working group. These included the installation of sidewalks, crosswalks, stop controls, signage and traffic calming options primarily along the Florence Avenue corridor.

Possible improvements to the private way connecting George Street to Rhinecliff Street and the paper street connecting Dow Avenue to the school and park grounds were discussed. The option of creating a School Zone for the Dallin school and the advantages and disadvantages of parking restrictions along Florence Avenue were also discussed.

John Sanchez informed the Committee that the Public Works sidewalk budget had been reduced from \$50,000 to \$25,000 due to budget cuts and that this year's sidewalk funds had already been spent. John reported that the latest estimate for sidewalk construction (including curbing) had risen significantly from the previous \$60-\$65 per linear foot.

Elisabeth Carr-Jones reported on the working group's contact with other Town and school committees. The working group agreed to finalize a set of recommendations and requested time at the next TAC meeting to have the recommendations discussed and voted by the Committee.

### **Symmes Transportation**

Ed Starr distributed copies of the Report of the TAC to the Arlington Redevelopment Board on Traffic Mitigation for the Symmes Redevelopment project. Ed and Elisabeth Carr-Jones reported on the April 11th Special Permit Public Hearing on transportation, and announced that an additional hearing had been scheduled for May 10, 2005.

### **BoS Correspondence**

Ed Starr distributed correspondence from the Board of Selectmen's Office sent to the TAC since its March meeting. The correspondence included requests for a crosswalk on Mystic Street at Winslow, SLOW signs on Park Avenue, STOP control at Hawthorne & Cedar Avenue, STOP control at Field, Wildwood, Fisher & Fayette and recommendations for improvements at the intersection of Webster and Philips Streets.

### **Crosswalk Thermoplastic**

Elisabeth Carr-Jones distributed a list of crosswalks to consider for 2005 thermoplastic installation. Having completed all but one of the Massachusetts Avenue crosswalks in 2004, the list included uncontrolled crosswalks on the Town's other arterial and larger collector roadways plus a new controlled crosswalk on Mystic Street. Since the list contained 26 crosswalks and the Town's yearly budget would only cover half of the list, the Committee voted to install the thermoplastic in priority order based on the average daily traffic for each roadway.

John Sanchez reported that the Summer Street reconstruction project specifies 8' wide crosswalks, where the Town's crosswalk standard specifies 10'. In order for the crosswalks to be installed at the full 10' width, the Town will need to fund the cost of the additional 2' of width for each crosswalk. This should be included in the 2006 thermoplastic list. John reported that he had talked with the contractor responsible for last year's thermoplastic crosswalks, who had agreed to repair the chipped areas and suggested that the thermoplastic be applied later in the summer. John reported that the painting contractor had inadvertently painted most of the thermoplastic crosswalks on Mass Ave in the week prior to Patriot's Day.

### **East Arlington Parking Study**

Jeff Maxtutis reported that he and Scott Smith had been meeting weekly with the group of four Tufts engineering students assigned to the East Arlington Parking Study project. Jeff further reported that the students had completed a 12-hour parking turnover study of roughly 1,100 parking spaces on Mass Ave and the adjacent roadways. Jeff requested that the students be invited to the May TAC meeting to present their work. Based on the success of this collaboration with Tuft engineering students, the TAC is encouraged to propose another project for consideration next spring.

### **Mass Ave Corridor**

John Sanchez reported that he had been in contact with Trish Domigan of VHB and had been informed by her that no date had yet been set for the Mass Highway meeting on the Mass Ave Corridor project. Trish had reported that her team was concentrating on the new cross-section of the roadway and the project budget, with the expectation of having material for the Town's review sometime next week.

John reported that he had met with Mass Highway's District Engineer, and that a site visit of the corridor will be scheduled. The Committee agreed to wait until the plans for the project can

be reviewed and further developed before presenting them to either Mass Highway or other Town Boards.

### **Personal Choice: Summer Street Place**

Ed Starr presented an overview of safety and quality of life issues with respect to Summer Street Place. This small, private way connects to Summer Street between Brattle and Grove Streets, but was not specifically addressed in the TAC report on the Symmes project. Residents indicated at the Symmes public hearing that exiting Summer Street Place is difficult due to poor visibility. Ed described line of sight problems for exiting motorists and the associated parking issues on Summer Street in the immediate vicinity. No action was recommended, but Committee members were encouraged to suggest options.

### **Town Departments**

John Sanchez distributed maps of the Arlington Reservoir area illustrating the available parking both before and during the project to rebuild the reservoir's berm and dam. Although the Town plans to open the Res for swimming during the construction, a significant amount of the available parking will be subsumed by the construction project. Options for providing additional parking were discussed. These options included: parking on the public and private roadways to the north and east of Lowell Street, temporarily removing one-hour restrictions on the north side of Lowell Street, allowing parking on part of the grassy area near the beach, providing a shuttle to satellite parking at Hurd Field and providing in-street pedestrian warning signs on both Lowell Street crosswalks serving the Res. The reservoir reconstruction project is scheduled for completion in the fall.

Lt. McHugh reported on a meeting of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce that he had attended earlier that day. At this meeting, parking issues at Broadway plaza and Arlington Center were discussed. Lt. McHugh pointed out that 80 spaces are currently available for business employee parking in the Russell Common municipal lot between Mystic and Medford Streets. Chuck Pappas reported that the Chamber of Commerce holds monthly Open House meetings and has periodic special events and meetings of the general membership.

### **Current Project List**

Ed Starr distributed an Active/Planned TAC projects list and Important/Urgent Rating list for TAC projects. Ed announced that Mike Rademacher had stepped forward to lead the Library Way Crosswalk working group and that other TAC members were encouraged to assist with the project. Elisabeth Carr-Jones agreed to provide historical information on the intersection from the Russell Street Neighborhood project.

### **Membership/Staffing**

Ralph Elwell reported that he was working with Selectman Jack Hurd and Ed Starr on scheduling interviews for the six candidates who had submitted materials for the open TAC position during the call for nominations period.

### **Other Business**

John Sanchez (along with the rest of the Committee) acknowledged Board of Selectmen Chair Jack Hurd's favorable comments about the TAC during his State of the Town Address before Town Meeting the previous evening.

**The meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.**

**Handouts:**

Meeting Agenda Packet including: Agenda, updated TAC Contact List, Report to Town Meeting, correspondence from the Board of Selectmen, Active/Planned Projects list and Important/Urgent Rating list of Projects - from Ed Starr

Meeting Minutes of March 22, 2005 - from Ed Starr (for Scott Smith)

Draft Transportation Report, Dallin School - from Jeff Maxtutis and Elisabeth Carr-Jones

Maps of area surrounding Arlington Reservoir illustrating available parking before and during dam construction - from John Sanchez